General Assembly

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Agenda item 70 *(a)*

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/64/L.33 and Add.1)]

64/77. Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 on the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance of the United Nations,

Recalling all relevant resolutions on safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel, including its resolution 63/138 of 11 December 2008, as well as Security Council resolution 1502 (2003) of 26 August 2003 and relevant statements by the President of the Council,

Recalling also all Security Council resolutions and presidential statements and reports of the Secretary-General to the Council on the protection of civilians in armed conflict,

Recalling further all relevant provisions of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as all relevant treaties,[1]

Reaffirming the need to promote and ensure respect for the principles and rules of international law, including international humanitarian law,

Reaffirming also the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Recalling that primary responsibility under international law for the security and protection of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel lies with the Government hosting a United Nations operation conducted

[1] They include, notably, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations of 13 February 1946, the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies of 21 November 1947, the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel of 9 December 1994, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel of 8 December 2005 (not yet in force), the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949 and the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions of 8 June 1977, and Amended Protocol II of 3 May 1996 to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects of 10 October 1980.

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under the Charter of the United Nations or its agreements with relevant organizations,

Expressing its appreciation to those Governments which respect the internationally agreed principles on the protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, while expressing concern over the lack of respect for these principles in some areas,

Urging all parties involved in armed conflicts, in compliance with international humanitarian law, in particular their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949[2] and the obligations applicable to them under the Additional Protocols thereto of 8 June 1977,[3] to ensure the security and protection of all humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel,

Welcoming the fact that the number of States parties to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel,[4] which entered into force on 15 January 1999, has continued to rise, the number now having reached eighty-eight, mindful of the need to promote the universality of the Convention, and recalling with appreciation the adoption of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel,[5] which expands the scope of legal protection under the Convention,

Deeply concerned by the dangers and security risks faced by humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel at the field level, as they operate in increasingly complex contexts, as well as the continuous erosion, in many cases, of respect for the principles and rules of international law, in particular international humanitarian law,

Stressing the importance of fully respecting the obligations relating to the use of vehicles and premises of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel as defined by relevant international instruments, as well as the obligations relating to distinctive emblems recognized in the Geneva Conventions,

Commending the courage and commitment of those who take part in humanitarian operations, often at great personal risk, especially locally recruited staff,

Expressing profound regret at the deaths of and violent acts against international and national humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel involved in the provision of humanitarian assistance, and strongly deploring the rising toll of casualties among such personnel in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations,

Expressing deep concern at the deep and long-lasting impacts of attacks and threats against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel,

Strongly condemning acts of murder and other forms of violence, rape and sexual assault and all forms of violence committed in particular against women and children, and intimidation, armed robbery, abduction, hostage-taking, kidnapping, harassment and illegal arrest and detention to which those participating in humanitarian operations are increasingly exposed, as well as attacks on humanitarian convoys and acts of destruction and looting of property,

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[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.

[3] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.

[4] Ibid., vol. 2051, No. 35457.

[5] Resolution 60/42, annex.

Expressing deep concern that the occurrence of attacks and threats against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel is a factor that increasingly restricts the provision of assistance and protection to populations in need,

Recalling the report entitled "Towards a Culture of Security and Accountability" of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide[4] and its recommendations, including on accountability,

Affirming the need for States to ensure that perpetrators of attacks committed on their territory against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel do not operate with impunity; and that the perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice, as provided for by national laws and obligations under international law,

Recalling the inclusion of attacks intentionally directed against personnel involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter as a war crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[5] and noting the role that the Court can play in appropriate cases in bringing to justice those responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian law,

Reaffirming the need to ensure adequate levels of safety and security for United Nations personnel and associated humanitarian personnel, including locally recruited staff, which constitutes an underlying duty of the Organization, and mindful of the need to promote and enhance security consciousness within the organizational culture of the United Nations and a culture of accountability at all levels, as well as to continue to promote awareness of and sensitivity to national and local cultures and laws,

Noting the importance of reinforcing the close collaboration between the United Nations and the host country on contingency planning, information exchange and risk assessment in the context of good mutual cooperation on issues relating to the security of United Nations and associated personnel,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General;[6]

2. *Urges* all States to make every effort to ensure the full and effective implementation of the relevant principles and rules of international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law related to the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations personnel;

3. *Strongly urges* all States to take the necessary measures to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel and to respect and ensure respect for the inviolability of United Nations premises, which are essential to the continuation and successful implementation of United Nations operations;

4. *Calls upon* all Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and delivery of supplies and equipment, in

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[4] Available from www.un.org/News/dh/infocus/terrorism/PanelOnSafetyReport.pdf

[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2187, No. 38544

[6] A/64/336

order to allow those personnel to perform efficiently their task of assisting the affected civilian population, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

5. *Calls upon* all States to consider becoming parties to and to respect fully their obligations under the relevant international instruments;

6. *Also calls upon* all States to consider becoming parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

7. *Further calls upon* all States to consider becoming parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel[9] as soon as possible so as to ensure its rapid entry into force, and urges States parties to put in place appropriate national legislation, as necessary, to enable its effective implementation;

8. *Calls upon* all States, all parties involved in armed conflict and all humanitarian actors to respect the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

9. *Expresses deep concern* over the recent dramatic escalation of threats and deliberate targeting of, and the disturbing trend of politically or criminally motivated attacks against, the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel;

10. *Strongly condemns* all threats and acts of violence against humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, reaffirms the need to hold accountable those responsible for such acts, strongly urges all States to take stronger action to ensure that any such acts committed on their territory are investigated fully and to ensure that the perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice in accordance with national laws and obligations under international law, and urges States to end impunity for such acts;

11. *Calls upon* all States to comply fully with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including as provided by the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 12 August 1949,[7] in order to respect and protect all humanitarian personnel in territories subject to their jurisdiction;

12. *Also calls upon* all States to provide adequate and prompt information in the event of the arrest or detention of humanitarian personnel or United Nations and associated personnel, so as to afford them the necessary medical assistance and to allow independent medical teams to visit and examine the health of those detained, and urges them to take the necessary measures to ensure the speedy release of those who have been arrested or detained in violation of the relevant conventions referred to in the present resolution and applicable international humanitarian law;

13. *Calls upon* all other parties involved in armed conflict to refrain from abducting humanitarian personnel or United Nations and associated personnel or detaining them in violation of the relevant conventions referred to in the present resolution and applicable international humanitarian law, and speedily to release, without harm or requirement of concession, any abductee or detainee;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to promote full respect for the human rights, privileges and immunities of United

[9] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Nations and other personnel carrying out activities in fulfilment of the mandate of a United Nations operation, and also requests the Secretary-General to seek the inclusion, in negotiations of headquarters and other mission agreements concerning United Nations and associated personnel, of the applicable conditions contained in the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations,[10] the Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Specialized Agencies[11] and the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel;[4]

15. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General continue to seek the inclusion of, and that host countries include, key provisions of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel, among others, those regarding the prevention of attacks against members of the operation, the establishment of such attacks as crimes punishable by law and the prosecution or extradition of offenders, in future as well as, if necessary, in existing status-of-forces, status-of-mission, host country and other related agreements negotiated between the United Nations and those countries, mindful of the importance of the timely conclusion of such agreements, and encourages further efforts in this regard;

16. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel to respect and, where required, observe the national laws of the country in which they are operating, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations;

17. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel remain sensitive to national and local customs and traditions in their countries of assignment and communicate clearly their purpose and objectives to local populations;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take the necessary measures to ensure that United Nations and other personnel carrying out activities in fulfilment of the mandate of a United Nations operation are properly informed about and operate in conformity with the minimum operating security standards and relevant codes of conduct and are properly informed about the conditions under which they are called upon to operate and the standards that they are required to meet, including those contained in relevant national laws and international law, and that adequate training in security, human rights law and international humanitarian law is provided so as to enhance their security and effectiveness in accomplishing their functions, and reaffirms the necessity for all other humanitarian organizations to provide their personnel with similar support;

19. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue, in coordination with Member States, to take the necessary measures to ensure that all United Nations premises and assets, including staff residences, are compliant with the United Nations minimum operating security standards and other relevant United Nations security standards;

20. *Welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General, stresses the need to ensure that all United Nations staff members receive adequate security training, including training to enhance cultural awareness, prior to their deployment to the field, as well as the need to attach a high priority to stress management training and related counselling services for United Nations staff throughout the system, and

[10] Resolution 22 A (I).

[11] Resolution 179 (II).

reaffirms the necessity for all other humanitarian organizations to provide their personnel with similar support;

21. *Also welcomes* the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to further enhance the security management system of the United Nations, and in this regard invites the United Nations and, as appropriate, other humanitarian organizations, working closely with host States, to further strengthen the analysis of threats to their safety and security in order to manage security risks by facilitating informed decisions on the maintenance of an effective presence in the field, inter alia, to fulfil their humanitarian mandate;

22. *Requests* the Secretary-General, inter alia, through the Inter-Agency Security Management Network, to continue to promote increased cooperation and collaboration among United Nations departments, organizations, funds and programmes and affiliated international organizations, including between their headquarters and field offices, in the planning and implementation of measures aimed at improving staff security, training and awareness, and calls upon all relevant United Nations departments, organizations, funds and programmes and affiliated international organizations to support those efforts;

23. *Calls upon* all relevant actors to make every effort in their public statements to support a favourable environment for the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel;

24. *Emphasizes* the need to pay particular attention to the safety and security of locally recruited humanitarian personnel, who are particularly vulnerable to attacks and who account for the majority of casualties, including in cases of kidnapping, harassment, banditry and intimidation, requests the Secretary-General to keep under review the relevant United Nations safety and security policy, operational and administrative arrangements related to locally recruited personnel, and calls upon humanitarian organizations to ensure that their staff are adequately informed about and trained in the relevant security measures, plans and initiatives of their respective organizations, which should be in line with applicable national laws and international law;

25. *Takes note* of the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General in addressing the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of United Nations Personnel and Premises Worldwide, including on accountability,[7] and looks forward to a progress report on measures to follow up on the recommendations of the Independent Panel and on the independent process on the issue of accountability, to be included in the report of the Secretary-General on safety and security to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session;

26. *Requests* the Department of Safety and Security of the Secretariat to continue to improve and implement an effective, modern and flexible information management capacity in support of analytical and operational requirements, including information on the range and scope of security incidents involving humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, including attacks against them, in order to reduce the risks arising in the context of United Nations-related operations;

27. *Welcomes* the work of the Secretary-General in enhancing security collaboration with host Governments, including efforts to support United Nations designated officials with regard to collaboration with host Government authorities on staff safety and security;

28. *Stresses* that the effective functioning of security operations at the country level requires a unified capacity for policy, standards, coordination, communication, compliance and threat and risk assessment, and notes the benefits thereof to United Nations and associated personnel, including those achieved by the Department of Safety and Security since its establishment;

29. *Recognizes* the steps taken by the Secretary-General thus far, as well as the need for continued efforts to enhance coordination and cooperation, both at the headquarters and at the field levels, between the United Nations and other humanitarian and non-governmental organizations on matters relating to the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, with a view to addressing mutual security concerns in the field, taking into account relevant national and local initiatives in this regard, inter alia, those derived from the "Saving Lives Together" framework, encourages collaborative initiatives to address security training needs, invites Member States to consider increasing support to those initiatives, and requests the Secretary-General to report on steps taken in this regard;

30. *Underlines* the urgent need to allocate adequate and predictable resources to the safety and security of United Nations personnel, through regular and extrabudgetary resources, including through the consolidated appeals process, and encourages all States to contribute to the Trust Fund for Security of Staff Members of the United Nations System, inter alia, with a view to reinforcing the efforts of the Department of Safety and Security to meet its mandate and responsibilities;

31. *Also underlines* the need for better coordination between the United Nations and host Governments, in accordance with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, on the use and deployment of essential equipment required to provide for the safety and security of United Nations personnel and associated personnel working in the delivery of humanitarian assistance by United Nations organizations;

32. *Recalls* the essential role of telecommunication resources in facilitating the safety of humanitarian personnel and United Nations and associated personnel, calls upon States to consider acceding to or ratifying the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations of 18 June 1998,[12] which entered into force on 8 January 2005, and urges them to facilitate and expedite, consistent with their national laws and international obligations applicable to them, the use of communications equipment in such operations, inter alia, by limiting and, whenever possible, expeditiously lifting the restrictions placed on the use of communications equipment by United Nations and associated personnel;

33. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a comprehensive and updated report on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel and on the implementation of the present resolution.

66th plenary meeting
7 December 2009

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[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2296, No. 40906.